

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

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FM AMEMBASSY ALGIERS
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INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN
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AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMEMBASSY MADRID
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY RABAT
AMEMBASSY RIYADH
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
USINT BAGHDAD
USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GERMANY

C O N F I D E N T I A L ALGIERS 3076

CINCEUR FOR POLAD

E. O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, XF, AG, RO, YO
SUBJ: ROMANIAN AMBASSADOR'S COMMENTS ON MIDDLE EAST CRISIS AND
ASSESSMENT OF YUGOSLAVIAN-ALGERIAN INTERESTS IN IT

1. IN COURSE OF COUTRESY CALL AT ROMANIAN EMBASSY ON DECEMBER 5,
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AMBASSADOR IOAN LAZARESCU, MADE FOLLOIWNIG COMMENTS ON RECENT DEV-
ELOPMENTS IN MIDDLE EAST AND ON YUGOSLAVIA'S AND ALGERIA'S INTER-
ESTS IN THOSE DEVELOPMENTS.

2. AMBASSADOR SAID THAT TRIP OF PRESIDENT TITO TO ROMANIA THIS WEEK
WAS DIRECT CONSEQUENCE OF SADAT'S VISIT TO ISRAEL AND THE MEETING
OF THE REJECTIONIST STATES IN TRIPOLI. BECAUSE OF ROLE ROMANIA PLA-

YED IN PAVING WAY FOR SADAT TRIP, TITO FEELS ROMANIANS SHARE HIS UNDERSTANDING OF AND CONCERN FOR CONSEQUENCES OF ARAB DIVISION. FURTHERMORE, AS "GRAND-DADDY" OF NON-ALIGNED GROUP, TITO FEELS COMPELLED TO "DO SOMETHING" TO KEEP OTHER MEMBERS OF THAT GROUP FROM TURNING AGAINST EACH OTHER. IT IS IN SEARCH OF THAT "SOMETHING" THAT TITO HAS TRAVELLED TO BUCHAREST.

3. THE AMBASSADOR EXPRESSED CAUTIOUS OPTIMISM THAT EGYPT AND ISRAEL WOULD SUCCESSFULLY NEGOTIATE A SEPARATE PEACE TREATY. WITHOUT EGYPT, HE SAID, THE ARAB REJECTIONIST STATES ARE NO THREAT TO ISRAEL.

4. LAZARESCU STATED UNEQUIVOCALLY THAT THE SOVIETS ARE SUPPLYING ARMS TO THE POLISARIO THROUGH THE GOA AND THAT THE SOVIETS ARE INCREASINGLY CONCERNED OVER ALGERIA'S INABILITY TO EXERCISE CONTROL OVER THE POLISARIO, EXCEPT BY SHUTTING OFF THE ARMS FLOW WHICH THEY CANNOT RISK DOING. HE CLAIMED THAT NO ONE CONTROLS THE POLISARIO AND, THEREFORE, WHAT IS NOW A LIMITED CONFLICT COULD ASSUME GREATER PROPORTIONS.

5. IN AGREEMENT WITH MOST WESTERN DIPLOMATS IN ALGIERS, LAZARESCU BELIEVES THAT BOUMEDIENE HIMSELF WENT TO TRIPOLI TO ASSOCIATE HIMSELF WITH THE ARAB REJECTIONIST STATES IN ORDER TO GAIN THEIR SUPPORT FOR HIS SAHARA POLICY AND, HOPEFULLY, THEIR RECOGNITION OF THE POLISARIO. HE HAS RETURNED EMPTY-HANDED. THE AMBASSADOR DOUBTS THAT BOUMEDIENE WILL EVER GET SUCH A GROUP OF LEADERS WHO BASICALLY DISTRUST EACH OTHER TO FOCUS ON AN ALGERIAN PROBLEM, MUCH LESS AGREE

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ON HOW TO SOLVE THEIR OWN. SAID LAZARESCU, ASSAD AND EL BAKR DISTRUST EACH OTHER, THE SAME FOR HABASH AND ARAFAT AND FOR BOUMEDIENE AND QUADHAFI.

6. COMMENT: WE ARE NOT AS SURE AS LAZARESCU THAT ALGERIANS HAVE LOST CONTROL OF POLISARIO. ALGERIANS THEMSELVES HAVE BEEN PUSHING THEME THAT POLISARIO IS INDEPENDENT LIBERATION MOVEMENT, AND DIPLOMATS OTHER THAN LAZARESCU ARE BEGINNING TO ACCEPT THIS LINE. OUR VIEW IS THAT, WHILE PERHAPS NOT ENJOYING THE TOTAL CONTROL OVER POLISARIO'S ACTIVITIES THEY ONCE DID, ALGERIANS STILL CALLING MAJOR SHOTS.

7. ON TRIPOLI SUMMIT, WE DO NOT BELIEVE BOUMEDIENE'S ATTENDANCE PROMPTED PRIMARILY BY WISH TO GARNER SUPPORT ON SAHARA. SITUATION WAS ONE IN WHICH ALGERIA HAD TO STAND UP AND BE COUNTED, AND REGIME HERE PROBABLY BELIEVED IT NECESSARY TO SIDE WITH RADICALS. STRONG SUPPORT OF EGYPT BY MOROCCO MAY ALSO HAVE INFLUENCED BOUMEDIENE'S DECISION. ONCE AT RIPOLI, HOWEVER, WE DO NOT DOUBT THAT BOUMEDIENE PRESSED HIS CASE WITH SYRIANS, WHO HAVE NOT SUPPORTED HIM ON SAHARA, AND WITH LIBYANS, WHOSE ADHERENCE TO CAUSE MAY BE FALTERING. HAYNES

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